

# THE QUILL

*A Journalist's Journal*

SIGMA DELTA CHI

*Professional Journalistic Fraternity*

Policies of "The Little Twinkler" Live

Make-up—Sensationally Unsensational

Sigma Delta Chi and the School

Democracy and Its Newspapers

Invading the Technical Field

Revolutionizing the Fourth Estate

News Room Philosophy

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# THE QUILL

OF SIGMA DELTA CHI

VOLUME XIV

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## Policies of the "Little Twinkler" Live

By a Member of the Kansas City Star Staff



VISITORS to the plant of the Kansas City Star at 18th and Grand Avenue, in Kansas City, Missouri, may note, as many have noted with curious attention, a little glass frame hanging upon the walls of the editorial room, enclosing a copy of a four-page newspaper, 14 inches by 20 in size, and with six narrow columns to a page, filled with closely condensed news and editorial matter and a lonesome advertisement or two. It is a copy of the first edition of the Star, printed September 18, 1880. If, after a scrutiny of this souvenir, the visitor will look around him he will see in one large room—said to be the most democratic editorial room in the world—a staff of 150 editors, reporters, copy writers, copy readers and artists preparing the copy for the paper of today. A few steps outside of the editorial room he may hear the murmurous clicking of forty-one typesetting machines, busy night and day, and on a visit to the basement below he will find nine octuple presses and one color press employed in turns in printing the daily output of the morning and evening week-day editions, and the Sunday and "Weekly" editions, of what is conceded by all newspaper experts to be "one of the greatest newspapers in the United States."

WHEN that little four-page paper first appeared, Kansas City was a sprawling frontier city—rather, a gangling overgrown town, unkempt, unpaved, unadorned, with few civic ideals, yet full of push and ambition and engrossed mainly in the material concerns of a rapidly growing business center. Today Kansas City, with approximately a half million people, a new modern charter, a city manager, miles upon miles of paved streets, a boulevard and park system famous the world over, well regulated public utilities, beautiful homes, a network of continental railroads, and a vast congeries of commercial industries, is reckoned one of the

most progressive of American cities. Between the marvelous growth of this great newspaper and that of the city which it chose for its home there is an intimate connection, an understanding of which will perhaps give a more lucid explanation of the policies and practices of the Kansas City Star, throughout its career, than could be obtained from abstract statements or conventional formulas.

KANSAS City and the Kansas City Star grew up together, the former from an uncouth border town of giant potentialities to a great metropolis of the middle west, the latter from a tabloid sheet, with a circulation its first year of 3,000 to a metropolitan "twice daily" with a circulation of nearly a half million copies a day. The growths of the city and of the newspaper were not merely complementary, or supplementary, phenomena—they were interwoven as intimately as effect and cause. Kansas City undoubtedly would have become a big city in time without the Star, but it would not have become the kind of city it is today without the Star. For forty-five years the Star has been blazing the ways of city development, fighting for the betterment of its community in civic, political, aesthetical and commercial lines, and its battles, though baffled often, were always won in the long run.

The parks and boulevards, the well paved streets, the public baths, the beautiful residential districts, a countryside of improved roads and artistic bridges, a community spirit exemplified in arts and industries—upon all these phases of urban development the influence of the Kansas City Star has been dominant.

Though it is recognized today as a national example of newspaper enterprise and culture, the foundations of the Star's great success lie in the fact that its founder, William R. Nelson, was a "natural born" builder—a city builder as well as a newspaper builder, and in the working out of his

constructive ideals the latter function became the handmaid of the former. Of no newspaper in the United States may it be more truthfully said that its policies fashioned the policies of its community as effectively as did those of the Kansas City Star the development trends of its city and the regions tributary to it.

These influences were not merely preceptory. In his city building activities Nelson carried out in practice what he preached in the columns of his paper. He built hundreds of homes for the people and built them better and adorned them more beautifully than any that had been built before his time. The Rockhill section of Kansas City, inaugurated by Nelson, became known as "Spotless Town." The houses were built of substantial brick and stone and after artistic and varied designs. Stone walls enclosed the yards and around the walls he grew clinging vines and flowering shrubs. He bridged the ravines with stone bridges and gradually transformed a rough, rocky hillside into a region of beauty that became a pattern for many subsequent additions to the city. And all the time he kept hammering away through the columns of the Star on the themes that his own activities were exemplifying—his editorial voices being always pitched to the keynote—"Make Kansas City a better place to live in." This slogan he did not confine to any one branch of civic activities—he sent its challenging notes into the political arenas, the churches, the theaters, the Boards of Trade, the legislative halls, the courts, the centers of the struggling art spirit, the educational system—and gradually through the years the "policies" of the Kansas City Star became the moulding influences in the progressive life of the city.

**N**OR were the effects of these cultural policies of the Star confined to its own city and its environments, though primarily directed to those fields. Kansas City is a gateway to a vast sweep of tributary agricultural territory in the west and southwest. The spirit of the Star invaded these regions and left its impress upon the life and the development, the enterprise and the artistic longings of their people. To this end Nelson established the Kansas City Weekly Star, at the nominal and phenomenal subscription price of twenty-five cents a year, a publication which today sends 375,000 newspapers weekly into eight outlying states that look to Kansas City as a commercial center.

This was not projected merely as an agricultural organ. It was designed to give to the farmer who could not subscribe to the daily papers the benefit of everything that was purveyed through the daily newspaper to the city dwellers—the local, national and foreign news, the cultural articles, the literary features of the daily paper were transmitted in condensed form to the country readers. But above everything else the interests of the farmer were looked after and protected. As Nelson fought the

city grafters, so in his Weekly Star he fought the exploiters of the farming interests. And again, in this connection, Nelson exemplified his doctrinal propaganda for better and more intensive farming by establishing the Sniabar Farm, in his own home county—a demonstration cattle farm, designed to introduce better breeding methods, whose influence has been widespread.

**W**RITING of these urban and agricultural features of the Star's policies and practices and their penetrating contacts, William Allen White said a few years ago: "William R. Nelson literally gave color to the life and thought and aspiration of ten millions of people between the Missouri River and the Rio Grande in the formative years of their growth as commonwealths—part of the national commonwealth. He and they together were dreaming States and building them, each reacting upon the other. The aspirations of the people were caught by his sensitive brain and he gave these aspirations back in the Star policies. Kansas, western Missouri, Oklahoma, northern Texas, New Mexico and Colorado form a fairly homogeneous section of our population. That section has grown up on the Star. Its religion, its conceptions of art, its politics, its business, its economic scale of living, reflect the influence of the indomitable mind of the man behind the Star, just as he gathered and voiced the latent visions of these people and gave them conscious form."

Usually when a newspaper's "policy" is referred to, the term carries with it implications merely of its political activities, often of its party affiliations, as marking the dominating tones of its influence. But the Star's politics have always been a secondary issue. Not in the sense that its political voice has been at any time neutral in tone or doubtful in assertion. It has always taken part in municipal, state and national political affairs, but never in a purely party spirit or for the mere sake of party success. It nailed the motto "Independent in Politics," to its masthead from the beginning and it is today, in a political sense, an independent paper.

The Star's politics are, and have always been, but an accessory to its program of community welfare, public improvement, clean government, progressive legislation, civic morality, and enlarged opportunities and standards of wholesome living both in city and country.

**W**HEN William R. Nelson, the founder of the Star, came to Kansas City in 1880, he didn't have much capital and his newspaper experience was limited to a few years as a partner of Samuel E. Morss in the ownership and management of the Sentinel, of Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Nelson's first big fundamental idea was that the time was ripe for cheaper journalism in the west. Another was that there was a growing demand for

evening papers. And a third was that the influence of the old fashioned party newspapers, with their labored editorials and sectional appeals, was rapidly passing. Kansas City had two morning papers, one Democratic and one Republican, both hide-bound in their party adherences. These papers sold on the streets for five cents the copy. Also there were one or two evening papers, selling at the same price, that peddled their services to the highest party bidders and lived a spasmodic life from election to election. The gap of opportunity for a cheap, reliable, news purveying, independent evening paper devoted primarily to the city's interests seemed wide open and into it came Nelson with his limited experience, his modest capital, his indomitable pluck and his big ideas. He launched the penny paper—the Evening Star—two cents the copy on the streets, and with it, by the way, he had to broach a few kegs of pennies for that humble coin was then a comparative stranger to the west.

"**T**HE Little Twinkler," as it was familiarly called—in rather a patronizing way by its morning contemporaries—selling at ten cents a week to subscribers, was a success from the start—not, however, in a financial way for some time. There were some lean years—hard, grubbing years, when loans had to be made and many shifts resorted to to keep the little paper afloat. But the people took to it and read it. It published the news of the city, in preference to foreign news and even to national news, and presented it in a brief, simple, bright and readable style. Its editorials were short and pungent and direct in tone. Its reprint was not culled from the floating "fillers" that were usually thrown into the western newspapers to balance gaping columns, but was carefully selected material from current and often classical literature and from standard exchanges. It was "cultural" stuff from the start—another idea of Nelson's which became a continuous policy of his paper.

In its first five years the Star had acquired ten thousand subscribers and they read the paper—every line of it—a feat that could easily be accomplished in the time it took to plough through the heavy editorial screeds of the morning blanket sheets. Then, when its independent political tone had become apparent in the first election it participated in, and the people began to understand that they could read the truth in the Star about the men and measures that concerned them, and that it was telling the truth for the benefit of the community above everything else, the Star was made welcome and found a permanent place in its new field, and so the foundations of a new institution became imbedded in Kansas City's schemes and schedules of growth and expansion.

How thoroughly Nelson understood what he was attempting to do, how completely his newspaper child was father to the man of today, may be seen by a perusal of the succinct and clear-ringing

"salutatory" with which the editor of 1880 announced the birth of "The Evening Star." It foreshadowed the policies and practices, both in the matter and the manner of news purveying, that has been consistently adhered to by the Star throughout its remarkable career. After calling attention to the growing demand for a cheap evening paper where readers "could find the actual news of the day without wading through columns of padding and useless verbiage," the editor announced that "The Evening Star" had come to meet such a demand. It had chosen Kansas City because it was "the commercial center of the great Missouri Valley and destined in a few years to become one of the largest and most important cities in America."

**S**PECIAL attention was called to what the editor loved to term his "miscellany"—or reprint—which in the evolution of the paper became one of its most popular and distinctive features. This, he promised, was to be carefully selected, with a view to giving his readers a daily reflection of the current thought of the world, as expressed in newspapers, magazines and books, keeping especially in view the influences of such carefully chosen literary material "upon the family circle."

Other newspapers, perhaps, have announced in more grandiloquent terms their purposes and pledges, but the Kansas City Star, from its very foundation, made good on every ground laid. The policies and practices of "The Little Twinkler" remained the policies and practices of the Kansas City Star as it grew in influence and expanded in wealth and prosperity with the growth and expansion of its beloved city. It maintained the price of "ten cents a week" even after it had acquired the property of the old Kansas City Times and inaugurated the original and daring idea of giving its readers a morning and evening paper at the same price—a price that was increased to fifteen cents a week only a short time ago, when the Sunday paper was enlarged and a colored art magazine added.

**E**VERY pledge contained in that "salutatory" of forty-five years ago might be reproduced in the Star today, with the word "redeemed" written after each item of the schedule. The Star is still an "independent newspaper, fearless and free in its support of men and measures." It is still with its circulation of 245,000 a day and 275,000 on Sunday pounding away on the pull-backs, still advocating further public improvements and community solidarity. It is still fighting party machinery and gang politics. It is still standing up for the farmer and his cultural as well as agricultural interests. It is still proud of its typographical dress, and its "miscellany" department, continued along the lines projected by its founder, has become one of the outstanding features of the paper and one that has really won a place of enduring interest in "the family circles" of its readers.

# Make-up—Sensationally Unsensational

By a Member of the Staff, Kansas City Star



THE make-up of The Kansas City Star might be described as sensationally unsensational, obtrusively unobtrusive, immodestly modest. It is all these things by contrast with other newspapers. If nonconformity is the essence of conspicuousness, then The Star's make-up is gorgeously conspicuous.

It uses no display type, no streamer headlines. It despairs the popular modern styles of playing up news. It keeps pictures off the first page. A line at the lead of the story tells on what page the pictures may be found. Runovers from the first page are used only when unavoidable. It prints in brevier and uses the old seven column measure. Ordinarily its appearance is as orderly as a Dutch housekeeper's living room. The first page carries four top heads in alternate columns. The top head is in three decks headed by a line capable of twenty letters. This layout calls for ingenuity in the headline writer, and involves a series of warnings on the bulletin board against the overworking of favorite short words—"looms," "scores," and such.

An extraordinary event, such as the senate vote on the world court, is allowed an "ordinary scare" with seven decks, headed by a larger, blacker line capable of fifteen letters. An event of greater news value, say a disastrous railroad wreck near Kansas City, would draw a "black scare," with only eight letters in the top line. It takes a Titanic disaster, or the beginning of a world war, to bring The Star to a two-column head.

One or two or three short but important items on the first page may be run with a two-deck "No. 9," blacker than the top line of the triple head. The bulk of the shorter items are used under a two-deck head with the top line in italics. This head is strikingly like the one that helped make the appearance of Dana's Sun distinguished.

Specially drawn cut heads are often used over reprint and fiction in the daily, and over feature stories in the Sunday paper. These, however, are carefully designed to be in harmony with the general make-up of the news heads.

THE effect of these relatively small and individually handsome heads is strikingly artistic and beautiful. At least it is if one can banish preconceived notions. William R. Nelson, founder and for thirty-five years editor of The Star, used to exult over its appearance as he would over a fine painting. "It's the handsomest newspaper page in America," he would exclaim, and undoubtedly that expressed his purpose in typography and make-up.

As to the effectiveness of this particular newspaper style in satisfying readers, there can be no question as far as The Star's clientele is concerned. Strangers coming to Kansas City often object to the paper's appearance. They are not used to it. They complain that they cannot find the news because of the small headlines. But experience in the Kansas City territory is that people who have been brought up on The Star value its distinctive appearance. The unusual make-up seems to contribute toward giving the paper a personality of its own. Its readers apparently develop a real affection for it. Its individuality appeals to them. They would bitterly resent any change. The makers of The Star would be the last to advise any other newspaper to change to The Star's make-up. All they know is that it is extraordinarily successful in meeting the requirements of readers who have been educated to its particular style.

THE typography of The Star was determined by Mr. Nelson. It was forecast in the first issue printed in 1880. A man of thoroughly artistic temperament, ugliness in any shape was an offense to him. He detested the commonplace, whether in the appearance of a city, a home, or a newspaper. The beautiful and unusual residence district which he laid out about his own home—a district with winding roads lined with stone walls covered with roses and honeysuckle—was an expression of the same feeling for beauty which manifested itself in the make-up of The Star. He determined every detail of type and headline. Woe to the brash young editor who thought some innovation might improve the paper's appearance and tried it without consulting the Old Man. He was always open to suggestions. But the distinctive beauty of his newspaper was something sacred—it was born with the tabloid sheet years ago.

Combined with his devotion to artistic typography was his supreme confidence that excellence in content would be recognized without any particular beating of drums. If the paper was clever, interesting, human, trustworthy, enterprising, in good taste, he used to say there would be no need to give away alarm clocks to induce people to read it, or to use startling and bizarre make-up. "Print the right sort of stuff; make it interesting; there won't be any trouble about the readers' finding it."

Mr. Nelson died in 1915. But his ideas have proved themselves so sound, so effective, that those charged with the conduct of The Star have no temptation to abandon them.

# Sigma Delta Chi and the School

By MITCHELL V. CHARNLEY

Assistant Managing Editor, The American Boy—National Historian, Sigma Delta Chi



WELVE years ago Lee A White, armed with a brief case full of petitions praying formal approval of Sigma Delta Chi, went to a two-day session of the American Conference of Teachers of Journalism at Madison, Wisconsin, and persuaded the teachers to "extend sympathy, cooperation and hearty endorsement" to the fraternity.

Since that time the "sympathy, cooperation and hearty endorsement" of journalism teachers have played an important part in the development of Sigma Delta Chi from an infant organization with nebulous "honorary" policies into a healthy and at least promising force in modern American journalism. Teachers of journalism have served on the fraternity's executive council; they have helped to direct its aims and policies; they have edited its magazine; they have on occasion kept chapters alive and progressive by single-handed efforts. They have criticized frequently and severely, too; but in the main their interest in the fraternity has been keen and constructive.

It is, after all, a constructive interest that leads the American Association of Teachers of Journalism and the Association of American Schools and Departments of Journalism (organizations that have nearly the same membership roll and that meet jointly) to "investigate" so vigorously the question of journalistic fraternities. Both societies have appointed committees to report on the purposes and attainments of existing honoraries and professionals and both have made reports in a recent "Journalism Bulletin." Dean Eric W. Allen of the University of Oregon reports for the A. A. S. D. J., and Professor F. W. Beckman of Iowa State College for the A. A. T. J. It is because most of their remarks and conclusions deal with Sigma Delta Chi, and because they question seriously certain practices and policies of the fraternity or its chapters, that the reports are of special interest to the fraternity.

BOILED down, the problems suggested may be grouped in three classes. The first relates to the ultimate, fundamental aim of Sigma Delta Chi;

the second to the specific activities and customs of undergraduate chapters; the third to the possibility of faculty establishment of a fraternity with a purely honorary scholastic basis for membership—a kind of Phi Beta Kappa of journalism.

Since Sigma Delta Chi officially scratched the word "honorary" from its title, officers of the fraternity have, perhaps vaguely, defined its aims as the improvement of journalism. They have hoped to find methods of raising the ethical standards of modern newspaper work; and they have, in the main, believed that a major step toward the goal is the

growth of a large body of active newspapermen—as distinguished from undergraduate journalists—who are individually possessed of high journalistic standards and who have a kind of group consciousness. These men, of course, must be the alumni members of Sigma Delta Chi; they must be recruited as undergraduates, but it is not until after they leave school and the immediate influence of teachers of journalism, the fraternity believes, that their greatest strength will be felt.

## Report of Fraternities

The following was taken from a report made to the A. A. T. J. by a committee headed by Prof. F. W. Beckman, director, department of agricultural journalism, Iowa State College:

"... several correspondents make the suggestion that the only way to meet this problem (membership) is for the nationals to eliminate chapters which cannot maintain a membership made up exclusively of those who are majoring in journalism. Paraphrasing Lincoln, one man declares that "Sigma Delta Chi can no longer endure half amateur and half professional, half service and half life-work."

HERE, then, is the first question raised by Dean Allen's report. "Before we undertake to criticize the fraternities," he says, "we ought to be clear as to whether we think they are failing to attain the ends they set for themselves, or whether we feel they are setting for themselves the wrong aims." He also says this: "The faculty man would regard the fraternity as successful if its main purpose and effect were to work upon the morale of the undergraduate and leave him at graduation with a better-digested education and with a finer appreciation of what is good in the profession. . . . It is significant that few faculty men seem to think that this purpose is being in any large degree attained."

Dean Allen goes on to say that most faculty men feel that Sigma Delta Chi's chief aim, ostensibly, is to build an ever bigger organization, and to use undergraduates only to extend the scope of the fraternity, to amass funds that will give the growing graduate body a firm financial basis.

Leave the first question for a moment, and look at the second—the specific activities of undergraduate chapters. Professor Beckman's report is almost completely concerned with this phase of the problem, and in general it is uncomplimentary. It points out, for one thing, that, try as the national organization will, it has been in many cases unable to enforce a strictly professional basis for election to membership. In many institutions, chiefly those with little journalistic instruction, it says, election to the fraternity is hardly more than a recognition of service on college publications; campus politics plays a big part in others; scholarship qualifications are not strict enough to satisfy most teachers.

PROFESSOR Beckman's report goes into detail regarding chapter activities, and concludes that most chapters are too busy with projects "that are more social than professional." Many enterprises are undertaken, it says, solely for the purpose of raising funds to maintain a heavy budget. This leads to a discussion of fraternity finances, and about half the teachers whose statements are summarized in the report declare their belief that the demands of local and national offices are too heavy. "To secure funds to promote conventions, provide prizes and so forth," the report says, "money-raising activities must be conducted, with the result that the membership becomes involved in a vicious circle of exacting tasks that interfere with what is best professional development."

A good many teachers object, apparently to the necessity for close relationship between the national office and local chapters. Some believe the time spent might be used to better advantage in distinctly local activities; others urge that the cost of national supervision must be kept to a minimum. But some teachers show themselves completely in accord with the Sigma Delta Chi belief in a strong national organization. "One teacher contends that strong national fraternities would be able to accomplish worth while results in promoting journalistic education and better ideals and standards in the practice of the profession."

About the third problem raised in the reports little is said officially. A report supplementary to Dean Allen's discusses without reaching a conclusion the formation of "honorary" fraternities—societies whose members are selected because of excellence in class work. The other reports suggest two possibilities—the establishment of a new fraternity on this scheme, with faculty members having complete or partial control, or the alteration of Sigma Delta Chi methods and aims to approximate the scholarship fraternity idea.

IT is apparent in the discussions of all three problems that journalism teachers look at Sigma Delta Chi and other journalistic fraternities not as

organizations, likely to justify their existence within themselves, but as possible means of expediting and assisting the work of schools and departments of journalism. This is the natural point of view for a faculty man to take. His purpose is to produce students imbued with journalistic ideas and ideals, and he believes that every convenient agency should be made to work toward that end. To be consistent, therefore, he must demand that Sigma Delta Chi aim not at a goal to be reached after graduation, but at the same goal he has set for himself.

At this general proposition there can be little cavil. In many of the specific criticisms of Sigma Delta Chi, officers of the fraternity must concur. The fraternity must be—and is—eager to "work upon the morale of the undergraduate." One of its major purposes is to instil in its members while they are students the best ideals of modern journalism. It does not encourage the kinds of activities in chapters to which teachers of journalism object; it desires to promote professional programs, and professional money-raising schemes where money-raising is necessary, and professional attitudes of mind.

The fraternity believes firmly, however, that its ultimate goal is something that must come after graduation, not before. It believes that when it has a nation-wide organization of college-trained men all with the same ideals and the same purposes, guided by a strong central office, it can accomplish the "improvement of journalistic ethics" which has always been its aim. It believes that, desirable as high grades in class work are, the true professional spirit should be the qualification for membership in the fraternity.

AND it must have the assistance of the teachers of journalism if it is to attain its ends. In closing his report Professor Beckman says, "Some years ago our association endorsed this great organization. It is our duty to help validate this endorsement. Clearly it seems a part of our business to work with these societies for the promotion of ends that are ours as well as theirs. If it is not, then what is our business?"

The question, then, resolves itself in to the propriety of the fraternity's ultimate goal. Those in charge of Sigma Delta Chi policy now believe it to be on the right track; in their belief they are supported by statements like that made in November by Sidney B. Whipple, managing editor of the Denver Express, "Sigma Delta Chi is the most valuable influence in coming journalism"—and by the interest and aid of such men as Lee White, of the Detroit News, publisher of Editor and Publisher, Ward A. Neffs, publisher of The Corn Belt Farm Daily, James Wright Brown, and James A. Stuart, Managing Editor of the Indianapolis Star, as well as by the backing of many journalism teachers.

# Democracy and its Newspapers

By RAYMOND D. LAWRENCE

of the Journalism Faculty, University of Oregon

**M**ORE and more is the literature of political science indicating the uneasiness of students of government with the state of democracy in the United States. Aside from those persons opposed to democratic government on principle, there are many of its friendly critics who are apprehensive over present political affairs. There are perilous reefs and stormy seas ahead for the good ship Democracy; and the main reason that questions concerning the press are of ultimate importance is because American democracy is confronted by these dangers.

Those who believe in the fundamental intelligence of the electorate declare the danger lies in the present state of public opinion. Voters no longer are able to get the facts; they do not have the means of learning the true state of governmental affairs. The country is too large for one man to understand what is going on in all of its parts, and he, therefore, must rely upon organs of information more than ever before. But these rivers of information are polluted by insidious propaganda, prejudice, lies and misinterpretation. One example is that of Russia. Whatever one's political convictions about the soviet system, one cannot help but resent the great mass of untruth that is printed every month about that country. Two great factors, censorship and prejudice, have prevented the American people from getting a straight-forward account of actual conditions in Russia. The same charge might be made of the United States in many of its national and state affairs.

**T**HE necessity of the electorate knowing the truth about public affairs in a democracy ought to be universally accepted, but whether accepted or not the facts can hardly lead one to an optimistic conclusion on the future of our present state.

It is not worthwhile to devote too much time to the faults and weaknesses of the press, but a short summary of them is to the purpose. There has been a great deal written on the subject, but few constructive attempts at a remedy. Oswald Garrison Villard, formerly editor of the New York Evening Post, in an address delivered at Kansas Newspaper week, summarized them as follows:

Suppression of news for profit, or because of fear of some powerful influence; the persistent refusal to right a wrong editorially; the laying of false

emphasis upon the news because of criminal or unworthy motives; an amazing and often criminal lack of accuracy in reporting; indefensible attacks upon public men coupled with shocking invasion of privacy of both public and private individuals from which not even women are exempt; deliberate falsification of news and facts. The sum of all this newspaper villainy being exemplified by the Hearst brand of yellow journalism.

**S**OME of these charges involve pure moral issues. I am concerned mainly with falsification and suppression of news and facts because of the political implications of this malpractice.

A few students of public affairs have assumed the attitude of Mr. Balfour† that "The newspaper press of this country (England) is one of the institutions under which we live, which we submit to, which we profit by, which we suffer from but which we do not criticize." Others have assumed a wholly condemnatory attitude: that there is nothing good

about the newspaper, charging it with complete corruptness, venality, and social degeneracy. Both of these viewpoints are, of course, extreme and irrational. Upton Sinclair‡ was partly correct, but largely inaccurate. Some of his theses are true, but his evidence was deplorably unauthentic. Journalism, like education, has been criticized by everyone who reads a newspaper. There are, of course, many newspaper editors and publishers whose integrity is unquestionable, who try to publish an honest and impartial journal.

Some publicists hold there is not one completely unbiased, impartial, unprejudiced newspaper in this country, one which has as its sole function the dissemination of information and fact, one which is responsible only to his high purpose and not to the commercial success of its owners.

**B**OBIEDENOSTSEFF, Russian publicist, points out the view of many modern political scientists toward the press:

Any vagabond or unacknowledged genius, any enterprising tradesman, with his own money, or with the money of others, may found a newspaper, even a great newspaper. He may attract a host of writers, ready to deliver judgment on any sub-

†Economic Journal V. 4, Sept. '94, pp. 393-405.

‡Upton Sinclair, *Brass Check*.

ject at a moment's notice; he may hire illiterate reporters to keep him supplied with rumors and scandals. His staff is then complete. From that day he sits in judgment on all the world, on ministers and administrators, on literature and art, on finance and industry. It is true that the new journal becomes a power only when it is sold on the market—that is, when it circulates among the public. For this talent is needed and the matter published must be attractive and congenial for the readers. Here, we might think, was some guarantee of the moral value of the undertaking—men of talent will not serve a feeble or contemptible editor or publisher; the public will not support a newspaper which is not a faithful echo of public opinion.

This guarantee is fictitious. Experience proves that money will attract talent under any conditions, and that talent is ready to write as its paymaster requires. Experience proves that the most contemptible persons—retired money-lenders,—news venders, and bankrupt gamblers,—may found newspapers, secure the services of talented writers and place their editions on the market as organs of public opinion.

Such a paper may flourish, attain consideration as an organ of public opinion, and be immensely remunerative to its owners, while no paper conducted upon firm moral principles or founded to meet the healthier instincts of the people could compete with it for a moment.\*

**T**HIS is an extreme point of view, of course. One of the strongest arguments favoring the present state of the press is that of its diversity. It is held that in our society there are many newspapers and journals of widely different views and policies. If the reader wants to get all sides he can take several journals and read between the lines, thereby getting enough facts to construct a sound opinion on events and conditions. This is true in that it is the only way the intelligent citizen today can get information. But after all it is a perverted method. We are not gazing directly at the facts, but at them through the colored glasses.

It is true there should be many newspapers with diverse views and opinions. It is folly for a government to impose a rigid censorship such as Russia has done, or to pollute its press with subsidies as France has done. It is equal folly for a government to suppress journals which may disagree with its policies. But there should be at least one impartial organ of opinion to which no man can impute unethical or socially immoral motives, and can be relied upon to expose graft, investigate corrupt practices, espouse worthwhile causes.

The function of a state press would be to provide the connecting link between the citizens and the government by giving the public impartial news; not interpretation of opinion, but facts. The newspaper which fulfills its function should effect social and political consciousness by giving data on which to form sound social and political judgments.†

\*Quoted by Albert J. Beveridge in *Russian Advance*.

†Delos F. Wilcox, *American Newspaper*, in Amer. Acad. Pol. and Soc. Sc. Annals, v. 16, July, 1900.

Because the ordinary newspaper is not responsible to a definite person or persons, it may pervert its function as it pleases. It may with impunity drive classes or the nation into any sort of false action, even war.

**W**HY not, then, like education, put some of our newspapers into government hands? The United States has been successful in its public school system. It is in the hands of experts, and is separated from party politics to a considerable extent. In addition, education is mainly left up to self-governing units of government. Why could this not be done with newspapers? Not with all newspapers, of course, but with one in each state, for instance; or perhaps two or three in the larger states. The idea is at least worth consideration, for, as the Nation points out in discussing another phase of the subject, "It will make a distinct contribution to the debate now going on as to whether under modern conditions it is possible to have a press worthy of the democratic spirit of the age, and free from class bias and prejudice."‡

It should be remembered that we are not considering the press as a commercial agency, but as a social and political force in the state for:

It is the evil power of a sensational press to increase the evil sentiment on which it thrives. The periodicals that live on false witness, one-sided statements, doctored news, demagogic appeals; the loud calling of public attention to all the petty or big crimes in the calendar; that fan the vices by their constant parade of them; that disseminate class hatred; that are vindictive in their enmities; that are used to advance the selfish and impudent ambitions of their owners; that exploit good causes for private emolument or personal advancement; that bring suspicion on restrained, accurate, disinterested criticism of public men by their reckless attacks; that make reform odious by conscienceless imitation of its honest action; that in a word, live by cultivating the appetite for sensationalism; such periodicals are parents of all the vulgarities. Opposition to such sources of evil encourages the "journal of conscience," as Norman Hapgood calls it—in its comparison with the conscienceless; and is a service to American democracy.‡

If we can make the press responsible, devote it to the social good, remove all traces of venality and dishonesty, whether intentional or accidental, a distinct step will be made in promotion of good citizenship in its widest sense.

**T**HE idea of a state press is not new; it has existed since the first attempts at censorship. The socialists probably make up the only class which does not doubt that if the state took over all the newspapers the plan would be a failure. But that is a much broader step than would seem advisable.

Upton Sinclair has proposed a "National News,"||

||*Nation*, May 10, p. 727, v. 108, 1919.

||Upton Sinclair, *Brass Check*.

which, although not a state newspaper, would serve about the same purpose. "This publication," he says, "will carry no advertisements and no editorials. It will not be a journal of opinion, but a record of events pure and simple. . . . It will have one purpose and one only, to give to the American people once every week the truth about the world's events. It will be strictly and absolutely non-partisan and never the propaganda organ of any cause." Mr. Sinclair's journal would be operated by an impartial board of directors, a part of which will represent various groups such as the American Federation of Labor, the National Teachers' Association, and others. Although the financing of the journal was approved by three experts, to whom Mr. Sinclair submitted the plan, it is extremely doubtful if the excellent idea could be put into practice. The public would probably not pay the high subscription price necessary to maintain the journal. The public does not care enough about the truth to pay for it. Mr. Sinclair's plan lacks one great advantage of the state-owned journal, which is that the latter is supported by state taxes. Mr. Bryan a few years ago proposed a National Bulletin,<sup>¶</sup> which plan is similar to Mr. Sinclair's except it would be owned by the national government. Mr. Bryan's ideas on the subject were hazy and his suggestion is of little value.

**I**N Oregon, a state which has always been of an experimental turn of mind, in 1910 a bill was proposed providing that the state publish an official gazette to be mailed once every two months to all voters free. The measure was defeated, its opponents declaring that the tax burden was too great, that there was no necessity for such a publication and that it would degenerate into a political organ of the state administration. It was intended that the "People's Gazette" be an impartial, non-partisan magazine devoted to state political information and unbiased investigation of governmental affairs. Had this measure been passed, it would have been as important as Oregon's then radical adoption of the initiative, referendum and recall.

Mr. Lippman tried to solve the problem by a plan of fact-finding bureaus, which would be in charge of expert political scientists and investigators who would have accurate information available for newspapers on important public questions and conditions. The difficulty with Mr. Lippman's plan is that while it may gather accurate information it does not disseminate it.

Socialism throws an interesting light on what such a state press might be; not because it would be wise to adopt their plan for the nationalization of the press but because it demonstrates one of the attempts to solve the problem from another viewpoint. Wells states:<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup>Forum, v. 65, April, 1921, pp. 455-58.

<sup>\*</sup>Socialism and the New State.

The newspaper of the Great State will be a plain record of home and foreign happenings. It will record the result of elections at home and abroad, the progress of industries, the growth or decline of peoples, the judgments in cases of dispute or arbitration, the births and marriages and deaths, the departures of travelers, the arrival of visitors, the accidents or misfortunes in its homes and factories. It will not record opinions, or be concerned with policies. Organs of opinion will be purely amateur in ownership and direction. An organ of opinion will not be published for gain, but to express the thoughts and desires of those who publish it.

**P**RACTICAL journalists will, of course, point out that "even were it possible to make this separation (of fact and opinion), the press that achieved this impossibility could not endure." Salmon points out:<sup>†</sup>

The mind demands movement, friction, attrition with other minds. News, in the generally accepted sense, is passive and informational and of itself cannot permanently satisfy the alert, restless human mind that reaches out for cooperation with other minds; that seeks new opinions; that is dissatisfied with its own decisions exclusively of news in the narrow interpretation of that word would be foredoomed to absolute failure. . . .

Writers who hold this viewpoint, with Lord Courtney point to the French press. The people of France read their journals to see what different men have to say on subjects of current interest, which may explain why there are so many political journals in France. Each politician feels the need of a medium through which to express his views on national politics.

It should be understood that the establishment of state newspapers would not greatly interfere with the private press. They would still have the right to publish, and would probably be the main organs of opinion.

**T**HE greatest danger of the state press is that it would fall into the hands of partisan politicos. Every means would have to be adopted to put it under the direction of impartial and high-minded boards of editors, who would be free to print the news whether or not it damaged the administration. Safeguards would have to be erected against the spoils system. In this regard, many lessons could be learned from our public schools, but unless the state press could be adequately protected from the subtle influence of party politicians its establishment might as well be given up as an ephemeral dream. Otherwise, its function would be prostituted, and its *raison d'être* non-existent.

Not only would such a state press to some extent remove the dangerous moral and ethical influence of some of the present day newspapers, but it would, together with the fact-finding bureau Mr. Lippman advocates, establish a clear, accurate and unbiased source of information of interest to the public.

<sup>†</sup>Lucy Maynard Salmon, *Newspaper and Authority*.

# Sigma Delta Chi News

Volume XIV

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN, MARCH, 1926

## BUTLER IS INSTALLED BY DEPAUW

Mother Chapter Assisted  
by Actives and Alumni  
Welcomes Fledgling

Installation of the Butler University Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi by the mother chapter of the fraternity of DePauw University, Greencastle, Ind., Jan. 21, at the Columbia Club, Indianapolis, was a notable event for Sigma Delta Chis in Indiana. Besides the ten Butler journalists eight prominent Indianapolis newspaper men were initiated. Both active and associate members were guests of the Indianapolis Alumni Chapter at a banquet following the ceremony.

National President Donald H. Clark, St. Louis, Mo.; First National Vice-president James A. Stuart, managing editor of the Indianapolis Star; and National Executive Council member R. A. McMahon, of Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind., were honor guests.

President Clark as installing officer, gave the oath of office to the Butler chapter officers.

Sixty Indiana Sigma Delta Chi's including delegates from DePauw, Indiana and Purdue Universities attended the dinner. Brother Stuart, retiring president of the Indianapolis alumni, was toastmaster. Butler students sang.

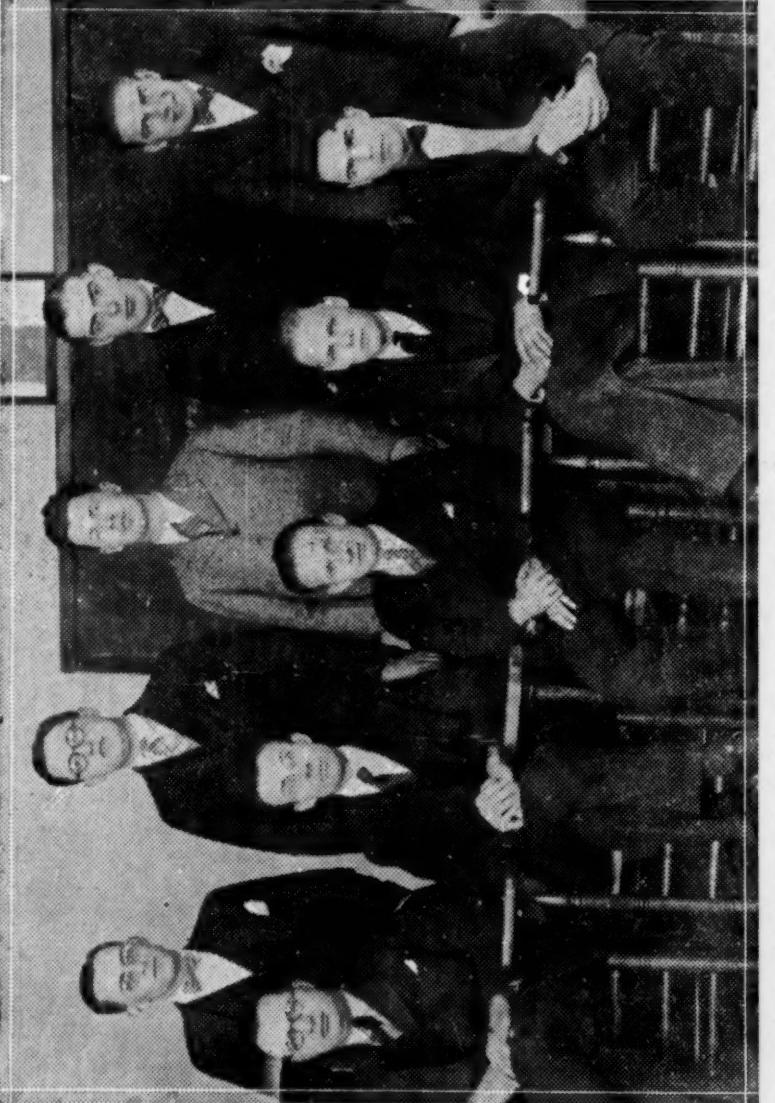
President Clark welcomed the new group on behalf of the national body and told of activities of the various chapters. Greetings were read from national officers. Hilton U. Brown, Butler trustee, and chairman of directors of The News; Benjamin F. Lawrence, general manager of the Star; and Volney B. Fowler, managing editor of the Times welcomed the new brothers on behalf of the three papers. Glenn W. Funk, De Pauw Chapter president, and Prof. Raymond W. Pence of DePauw; James W. Elliott, and Frank R. Elliott of Indiana and R. A. McMahon of Purdue spoke in welcome to the new Chapter.

Thomas F. Smith, Butler chapter president and faculty advisor, responded. William Herschell, known as the Hoosier poet, and close friend of the late James Whitcomb Riley, told of his cub days. He is a special writer for The News.

To Elect Memorial

alumni and the DePauw Chapter are spon-

## Members of New Butler Chapter, Sigma Delta Chi



## NEW GROUP FORESEES BUSY YEAR

South Dakota to Press  
Older Chapters  
for Honors

With a program of activity outlined for itself that will force older chapters to put in some extra work to win the Elocution Contest trophy this year, South Dakota chapter, at the University of South Dakota, Vermillion, S. Dak., on the night of January 21, became a unit in Sigma Delta Chi.

The installation ceremony was conducted by Prof. F. W. Beckman, director of the department of agricultural journalism, Iowa State College, assisted by Prof. L. B. White (Kans., '23) of the department of journalism, University of South Dakota, E. G. Troutz, instructor, J. R. Brackett, newly elected president of the chapter, Merlin Kuntz, vice-president, H. R. Kenaston, secretary, Orbuck Olson, treasurer, Bernard Murphy, Alvin K. Arphy, Marvin Leonard, Richard Maloney, Russell Creaser, Louis Tolleson, Kenneth Patterson, Philo Meisenholder, Harold Westre, Stuart Walker, Ashley Brown, G. T. Mickelson and Stanton L. Clark.

In celebration of its admittance to Sigma Delta Chi, the chapter held a gridiron banquet the evening following the installation. This proved highly successful both socially and financially. Activities which the new chapter has planned for the coming year include publication of a humor magazine; a popularity contest through which to encourage subscriptions to the humor magazine; preparation of a novel and highly attractive feature section for the university annual; the offering of a small prize for the best reporting done on the campus and a "best high school paper contest," which will culminate in a conference of high school editors next fall.

## MANY SEEK BUREAU AID

Registrations for the Personnel Bureau in the past few weeks have shown that

## It Happens In the Best Of Families

Comes a time in the lives of the best of men when an admission of error is necessary to achieve the con-

## NEW BUREAU FUNCTIONING

The National Speakers Bureau of Sigma Delta Chi, under the direction of Executive Councillor Franklin M. Reck, is rapidly

almost ready to begin its work.

BUREAU AID

*In the Best  
Of Families*

FUNCTION

hell, known as the Hoosier poet, and those friends of the late James Whitcomb

Wisconsin Edits  
*Promenade Issue*

**As** it has done in the past, Wisconsin chapter of Sigma Delta Chi published the official newspaper for the Wisconsin Junior Promenade, held on the evening of February 5 in the Wisconsin state capitol.

The Prom edition this year contained 15½-page, being published in the form of the Daily Cardinal, student newspaper of the university. It was sold on the capitol floor shortly after midnight.

At the last meeting of the semester, January 19, Otis L. Wiese '26, was elected president, Victor Portman '26, treasurer, and W.A. MacLean '26, vice-president.

W.H.A. Wiese, W.M. Ayer, and W.A. MacLean were present at the meeting.

*Des Moines Body*  
Mr Monfried, '26, Quill correspondent.

Elected Officers \_\_\_\_\_ of the Day

At a recent meeting of the Des Moines Alumni Chapter, Sigma Delta Chi, Dr. H. D. Read (Ames) was elected president, and H. D. Read (Iowa) secretary. Drips succeeded Don F. Malin, Ames, who has moved to Chicago where he will be associated with Sears Roebuck radio station. Read succeeds R. W. Moorehead (Grinnell), '20.

## Suspensions Are Lifted From Two

Believing that conditions now warrant the continuance of active chapters of Sigma Delta Chi at Cornell and Pittsburgh Universities, the executive council of the Association in session at Chicago February

The Missouri chapter is now publishing a literary magazine, *The Missouri Scroll*. The magazine is a monthly and contains poetry, editorials, special articles and fiction. Contributions are not limited to the University and all material should be sent to Sigma Delta Chi at the School of Journalism, University of Missouri. A feature of the first number was a special contribution by Dr. J. W. Hudson, noted philosopher and author.

## ALUMNI ARE ORGANIZING

groups of Sigma Delta Chi alumni in Omaha, San Francisco, Spokane and Portland have taken steps toward organization and are now preparing to become official alumni chapters of the organization, reports Alumni Secretary R. B. Burcham.

ation. With no present, plans were made for future meetings and for bringing Sigma Delta Cis into the Sigma Chi. C. D. Hudson was elected president; G. B. Foster, vice president and A. Bankson, secretary-treasurer.

rectories and are making attempts to keep in touch with all the men in their vicinity. The alumni secretary will be furnished directories to any group organizing chapters of the fraternity interested in

**ASSOCIATES WITH W. S. C.**  
Ed M. Steiner (Grinnell '24) interested in journalism at the State College

State chapter. Mr. Steiner recently led a leading part in an all-collegic production and received very favorable comment.

## **ALUMNI ARE ORGANIZING**

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### **Toronto Renews Lecture Course**

Being firm believers in the idea that the business of writing for the press can be taught, the Toronto Chapter of Sigma Delta Chi is again conducting its annual lesson course in journalism, in co-operation with the Department of University Extension of Toronto University. The course was opened this year by

**R**itter, fast-national press George R. ritter, his subject was editor of Sigma Delta Chi. His subject was "Can Journalism Be Taught?" Mr. Pierrot was followed by Mary Lowrie Ross, a well known woman among Canadian writers, and H. Napier Moore, newly appointed editor of MacLean's Magazine, Toronto.

**Radio Editor is Chapter Speaker**

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The requirements and duties of a radio editor are similar to the requirements and duties of any editor. This opinion was expressed by Frank E. Mullen, Iowa State radio editor for the National Assoc.

**M**AN AND FARMER, a weekly agricultural magazine printed at Pittsburgh, Pa., in a talk before the members of the Iowa State chapter at an informal dinner given in his honor.

Mullen said his first and biggest task was to create an interest in the farm material so it would have a big audience even when broadcast in competition with entertainment numbers from other stations.

young journalists to look into the possibilities of the radio editing field.

## *Washington State Has Grid Banquet*

According to Director Tarr the Bureau is meeting with enthusiasm among publishers and editors who have had occasion to use its service. Many publishers have signified their intention of using the Bureau whenever possible.

"After six months of work, much of which was "preparatory", reports Tarr "we need not theorize, but can say from our own experience that the Bureau is offering a service that is both needed and appreciated, and that it will become an extremely worthwhile branch of the franchise business."

**ORGANIZING**      **Toronto Renews  
Lecture Course**

Groups of Sigma Delta Chi alumnae in Omaha, San Francisco, Spokane and Portland have taken steps toward organization and are now preparing to meet all as official alumnae chapters of the Sigma Delta Chi Fraternity.

Being firm believers in the idea that the business of writing for the press can be successfully conducted by women, the alumnae chapters are now publishing their own news bulletins.

La Chi is again conducting its annual lecture course in journalism, in co-operation with the Department of University extension of Toronto University. The course was opened this year by George F. Pierrot, Past-National President of Sigma Delta Chi. His subject was "Can Journalism Be Taught?" Mr. Pierrot was followed by Mary Lowrie Ross, a well known woman among Canadian writers, and H. Napier Moore, newly appointed professor of English literature at the University.

## **Radio Editor Is Chapter Speaker**

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The requirements and duties of a radio editor were discussed, and those who are interested in organization and who have been furnished with fraternal secretaries and are making attempts in touch with all the men in their communities. The alumni secretary will be furnish directories to any group is organizing.

6533 63rd Ave., Omaha, Roy Guillet, Northwestern Bell Telephone Co., San Francisco, J. E. Thrash, Motor Land, 11 Ness Ave., Spokane, R. A. Bank, 4144 Milton Street.

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COLLEGIALITIES WITH W. S. C.  
ARD M. STEINER (Grinnell '24)

in journalism at the State College, is an affiliate with Washington State chapter. Mr. Steiner recently became a leading part in an all-college production and received very favorable comment.

# THE QUILL

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The Quill is published by Sigma Delta Chi in the months of January, March, May, September, October and December. It is devoted exclusively to the interests of journalists engaged in professional work and of young men studying journalism in American and Canadian colleges and universities. It is the official publication of Sigma Delta Chi, International professional journalistic fraternity, founded at DePauw University, April 17, 1909."

MARK L. HAAS  
Managing Editor

All editorial matter for The Quill must be mailed to the managing editor, Mark L. Haas 2716 Rochester St., Detroit, Mich. Absolute deadline is the twenty-fifth of the month preceding the month of publication. All copy must be submitted gratis. The Quill welcomes editorial contributions from non-members of the fraternity as well as members.

The Quill has applied for a transfer of second class privileges from Champaign, Ill., to Ann Arbor, Mich.

Subscription rates: \$1.00 per year, in advance, to both members and non-members; Life, \$20.00.

MARCH 1926

**I**N January 1921 there appeared in THE QUILL an editorial by the editor of that period, Lee A White. Titled "Hail and Farewell", this editorial served as the parting words of the editor to his readers for Mr. White was relinquishing the editorship after six years of loyal, extremely successful effort.

This present issue of THE QUILL marks the completion of another editor's term and the passing of another editor into the rank of "Has Beens." And in writing "thirty" after his work, the present editor wishes to refresh in the minds of old readers and introduce to the minds of new readers parts of that editorial which, though it appeared five years ago, is as timely and apropos at the present time as it must have been then.

To Lee A White must go a great deal of the credit for the fraternity's present viewpoint. Constantly fighting the attitude taken by many members and some national officers that Sigma Delta Chi should operate as a collegiate honorary, he gradually won proponents to his cause and now, as a result of the foundation he laid, Sigma Delta Chi classifies itself as a *professional* fraternity, an organization that continues to live in the hearts of its members after they have been granted their diplomas, a society whose aims and policies make it equally as outstanding in the alumni body as in the undergraduate body.

Read what Mr. White wrote five years ago:

"WITH each change in editorship, THE QUILL has, quite naturally considering its youth, undergone measurable changes, each for the better the editors have hoped, at least so far as basic purposes were concerned. Such regret as each has felt upon retirement—Frank Pennell, Pyke Johnson, Carl Getz in turn—was lightened by a sense of freedom from irksome responsibilities, and deep expectation that the magazine, into which had gone so much of his heart, would profit by acquiring a new pilot.

What advancement is to come under the sagacious directorship of Prof. Frank Martin only he could suggest; but the fraternity may rest in the assurance that his personal capacities will be fortified by the lofty and truly professional spirit which pervades the University of Missouri school of journalism. The product of these forces will be worthy of Sigma Delta Chi and of the best traditions of American journalism.

"Some reference to the unvoiced and perhaps undemonstrated ambition of the retiring editor may be forgiven. THE QUILL began as little more than a medium for the exchange of chapter news; it progressed, through a rather nondescript stage, to semi-professionalism. Gradually, it has abandoned emphasis on personality sketches, bald experience stories and shop technique. More and more it has seemed to the editor, after an experience covering six years, that the function of THE QUILL, like that of the fraternity, rested in ever increasing attention to those problems of journalism too likely to be overlooked even, unfortunately, in some schools of journalism: that is to say, the foundation principles of the profession, and the ethical concepts which should guide the practitioner.

"If the new editor sees eye to eye with the old, he will be perplexed by a problem that must be obvious to thoughtful members of the fraternity. That is, whether THE QUILL can successfully continue to try to serve the peculiar and rather narrow interests of the undergraduate, and at the same time the professional needs of the man engaged in the practice of his chosen profession. Approximately four-fifths of those who receive THE QUILL are no longer in college, and the increase in alumni of course far surpasses any possible increase in undergraduate membership through establishment of new chapters. This issue is a demonstration to those who voted at the convention for more space for chapters that their will is respected in utter violence to professional judgment; yet such convention action is inevitable so long as the undergraduates furnish all the delegates. In the long run, there is good reason to believe the undergraduate will be grateful for the polite evasion of his demands; and certainly if he studies chapter letters and observes the difficulties experienced by the editor in obtaining them, he will recognize how lacking they are in that merit which would reward the editor for his effort.

"The solution would be, of course, the publication of two magazines, one serving the interests of three or four hundred undergraduates (assuming, as we should not, that those interests are immature and non-professional), and another for the sixteen hundred alumni whose bounden duty and eager desire it is to advance themselves in their profession, and to try to make journalism in some degree better through their devotion and labor. The financial question attached is, however, so serious that it would seem the better part of wisdom to attach to the duties of chapter and national officers the exchange of information which seems needful, and permit THE QUILL to voice not only to its membership but to the world quite generally, the idealism and professional purport of the fraternity.

"Periodicity is in itself a grave problem. THE QUILL is a quarterly because it costs less to issue it four times a year than twelve, and because it is humanly impossible for a breadwinner to do the larger task, single-handed. The result is that alumni are easily lost trace of; the influence of the magazine is intermittent; interest in it is fragile and fickle. The editor will not soon forget how many issues he published ere a single letter of recognition came; nor how few but grateful to the ear were the subsequent words of commendation. This in itself is to a degree blamable upon the infrequent appearance and hence influence of the magazine; but considering that there are no other emoluments of office, the membership might be as generous in its criticism and comment as its conscience and reason will permit. This is asked, not for the retiring editor but for his successor.

"To some THE QUILL may appear a very trivial organ of journalism; it may be that, and it may be more. But in numbers, it is not quite as inconsequential as might be supposed; indeed, it stands very near the top in point of circulation among the journalistic publications of the country, trade and professional. As the fraternity grows—and its strides have been nothing short of amazing—THE QUILL will be ever more conspicuous and potent as a force in journalism; and it is the deep regret of the retiring editor that he may not serve indefinitely to sense this growth, to reap rich reward in a fine consciousness of service."

**W**RITTEN five years but just the message with which the present editor wishes to bring his editorship to a close—a message urging the continuance of the professional viewpoint of Sigma Delta Chi.

Even today there are those who look upon Sigma Delta Chi membership as the ultimate in collegiate activity, who consider the wearing of the fraternity pin significant of reward for past accomplishment in the journalistic field. These have failed to grasp the great purpose and unlimited possibilities of the *professional* Sigma Delta Chi. They view the recognition given their ability with a self satisfied air which considers the past and present but ignores the future.

Students of journalism are not selected for membership in Sigma Delta Chi because of the achievement they already have to their credit. True enough such achievement serves as a basis for determining a man's eligibility. But it is the potential strength of the prospective member that should be the deciding factor since the undergraduate body of Sigma Delta Chi represents not the actual strength of the fraternity but its potential strength. The actual strength is evidenced in the influence the alumni body of the fraternity has on the profession of journalism, for only in public service does the fruit of Sigma Delta Chi training come into full bloom. Undergraduates of Sigma Delta Chi are apprentices whose apprenticeship ends only with the receipt of diplomas.

Only a *retiring* editor could make that statement even though it is truth. The retiring editor of THE QUILL is not so far separated from undergraduate life

that he does not recognize the resentment toward the alumni body that exists with the undergraduates. He even recalls heated discussions in which he himself, while an undergraduate, condemned alumni for taking such a prominent part in what he then considered a collegiate organization—usurping our rights he called it. "We pay the bills don't we?" was one of his pet comebacks. Surrounded as they are by social and honorary societies which die, so far as the individual member is concerned, when he is graduated, undergraduates of Sigma Delta Chi have difficulty in sensing the bigness, the perpetuity, the unending purpose of this organization. But not until this realization is attained by the undergraduate body can Sigma Delta Chi enjoy the influence in its field that it merits.

Sigma Delta Chi is comparable to a great army operating under war conditions. The undergraduate body represents the Source of Supply. Constantly troops are being sent up to the front by the training officers, represented by the various journalism faculties. At the front the troops are given their first real opportunity to show their worth. If the troops act as an undisciplined mob the line can never advance. If Sigma Delta Chi fails to "advance the line" its worth to the profession of journalism is nil.

The success of Sigma Delta Chi depends on the three equally important elements (1) Undergraduate membership, (2) Journalism faculties, (3) Alumni membership.

Sigma Delta Chi must have an undergraduate body that realizes and gladly accepts the obligations the fraternity as a whole has taken unto itself; it must extend its membership only to those schools properly equipped to turn out the type of "soldiers" essential to the attainment of the fraternity's goal; and it must keep alive in its alumni body high ideals and an undying interest in the advancement of journalism so that the "front line" will ever be manned by loyal, scrupulous, unyielding fighters.

To the purpose of creating these conditions let THE QUILL be dedicated.

## What You Say

You say your diction holds you down?  
Words cause you fear?—allay it!  
It's *what* you say that brings renown,  
And not the way you say it.

\* \* \*

It's not the pretty words—the garnished phrases,  
Superlatives that sparkle—kindle fire,  
Nor yet the stilted lines of doting sages  
Who clothe their works in formal, cold attire.  
It's not the rhythmic roll of verbs in action,  
Nor nouns that seem to strike with deadly might,  
The adverbs that you use need no attraction,  
In fact, all parts of speech may well be trite.

\* \* \*

So let me tip you off again.  
Don't hide your view—portray it.  
It's *what* you say that interests men  
And not the way you say it.

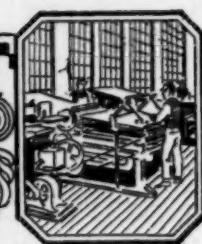
\* \* \*

The one who uses fancy words—believe it,  
Is really one who hasn't much to say  
Idea?—Bosh! Another must conceive it,  
For all he does is give it gilt array.  
The greatest works that man has ever written,  
Have lived but not for words that they  
contained.  
The words and pretty phrases are forgotten,  
And only thoughts they stood for have remained.

\* \* \*

So if you've something you would say.  
It's foolish to delay it.  
It's *what* you say that counts today  
And not the way you say it.

# WITH SIGMA DELTA CHI AFIELD



CLIFFORD DEPUY, prominent member of the National Councilors of Sigma Delta Chi, has been chosen by Governor John Hammill as one of the committee of fifty Iowans who will direct Iowa's campaign for more stabilized agricultural conditions. DePuy is publisher of the DePuy banking and insurance publications in Des Moines, Fort Worth, Kansas City, and St. Louis. He was recently elected president of the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce.

DON MALIN (Ames '21) formerly connected with the editorial department of Wallace's Farmer, Des Moines, has for some time been in his new position with the Coolidge Advertising Agency of this city. Malin is president of the Des Moines Alumni chapter of Sigma Delta Chi.

HAL READ (Iowa '23) was recently married to Miss Marion Brown, graduate of Drake University, and resident of Des Moines. She is a Kappa Alpha Theta and also a member of Theta Phi Eta, national dramatic society and is at present conducting a dramatic studio in Des Moines. Read is connected with the service department, Equitable of Iowa.

WILLARD R. SMITH, Jr., (Grinnell '21) now with the Des Moines branch of the United Press, is the proud father of a boy, born Feb. 1, name, Willard R. Smith, III.

IRVIN D. BORDERS (Missouri '24) recently accepted a position on the reportorial staff of the Miami (Fla.) News. He was formerly located in Houston, Tex.

MARION R. CRACRAFT (Missouri '26) is now telegraph editor of the Pittsburg (Kan.) Sun.

EDWARD B. SMITH (Missouri '21) southern superintendent of the Consolidated Press with headquarters at Washington, was recently married.

JOE HERRIN (Missouri '25) is managing editor of two dailies in Marshall, Tex.

HAL WINSBOROUGH (Missouri '26) is now with the Marshall (Tex.) Messenger.

HOWARD R. VAN KIRK (Okla. '21) carries the title of literary editor

on The Spectator, weekly journal devoted to editorial comment and notes on the arts and the doings of country club folk about Portland, Ore.—duties, according to Van Kirk, range from interviews with visiting personages of note to insisting that the editor really is not in.

H. L. HARRIS (Iowa State '26) a senior in the Technical Journalism Department at Iowa State College last quarter, is now on the staff of the Merchant's Trade Journal of Des Moines, Ia. Harris, at the time of leaving college, was president of the Iowa State chapter. His place is being filled by David Ainsworth (Iowa State '26).

R. V. PETERSON (Iowa State '25) has been employed by the Associated Press in Des Moines, Ia., since his graduation last spring.

R. W. BECKMAN (Iowa State '25) son of Professor Beckman, head of the Journalism Department at Iowa State College and donor of the Beckman Efficiency Cup, is now on the editorial staff of the Des Moines (Iowa) Register.

PETER AINSWORTH (Iowa State '25) is now employed on the editorial staff of the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Gazette.

JEWELL JOHNSON (Iowa State '25) is at the head of a vaudeville troupe traveling out of Chicago.

FRED FERGUSON (Iowa State '25) is bulletin editor for the Department of Journalism at Iowa State College.

JAMES E. O'BRYON (Kansas '24) is a successful free lance cartoonist in Chicago.

CHARLES "BUDDY" ROGERS (Kansas '25) who has been selected to play a leading part in the picture "Beau Geste," left for Algiers, Jan. 30, for the filming of part of the picture. Rogers was chosen in the spring of 1925 by the Famous Players-Lasky Corporation to enter a school for prospective film stars. He was given the lead in "Glorious Youth," a student picture.

GEORGE F. PIERROT (Wash. '20) past national president of Sigma Delta Chi, and his wife sailed from New York

February 20 for a three months' stay in Europe.

MARK M. WERNER (Nebraska '25) has accepted a position on the editorial staff of The Alliance (Nebraska) Times-Herald.

BERT D. QUACKENBUSH (Nebraska '22) who has been touring the country on research work, is now with the McKinley Publishing Co., at Kansas City, Mo.

FRANK M. MIDKIFF (Texas '25) is now editor of the Sunday Morning News, of Austin, Texas.

JOSEPH W. HICKS (Okla. '23) formerly assistant city editor of the Oklahoma City Times is now in the advertising department of Bylesby Engineering and Management Corporation of Chicago. Hicks is managing editor of a monthly magazine on public relations.

GEORGE L. GEIGER (Wisconsin '23) has been transferred from the rewrite staff of the Kansas City Journal-Post to the Sunday department and is now serving as assistant Sunday editor under Tom Collins (Kansas).

MORTIMER GOODWIN (Iowa State '23) national treasurer of Sigma Delta Chi, was married January 16 to Miss Mary Frances Mean of Boone, Iowa. Mr. and Mrs. Goodwin spent their honeymoon in Florida. Goodwin is associate editor of Breeder's Gazette, Chicago. While in school, he was president of the Iowa State chapter and editor of the Iowa State Student.

RYLAND PETTY (Kansas '25) is superintendent of the Tropical Sun Publishing Company of West Palm Beach, Florida.

JOHN MONTGOMERY (Kansas '25) is editor of the Miami Riviera, Coral Gables, Florida. This is a weekly publication which made its first appearance January 13, 1926.

ORIN S. WERNECKE (Wisconsin '25) was recently appointed Eastern Manager of the Educational Book Department of the A. W. Shaw Publishing Co. His office is at 342 Madison Avenue, New York City. Wernecke was well known in journalistic circles

in Wisconsin, having been advertising and publicity director of the U. of W. Quadrennial Exposition which attracted thousands of persons from all parts of the state.

LYMAN H. THOMPSON (Knox '17) is now with Tamlyn and Brown, 17 E. 42nd Street, New York City, which firm specializes in endowment campaigns for educational institutions. He is associate director of the Smithsonian Institution campaign for \$10,000,000 and the Phi Beta Kappa campaign for \$1,000,000. His duties include the organizing work in metropolitan New York and in New England.

HAROLD J. WELCH (Columbia '25) until recently Instructor in Journalism at Knox College is now on the copy desk of the New York World.

WILLIAM O. TRAPP (Indiana '12) is author of an article, "Pacing Father Time," which appeared in the February 6, 1926, issue of The Saturday Evening Post.

CARROL McLEOD (Toronto) has accepted a position on the Toronto Globe. He is doing this work in addition to his regular university course.

MARVIN G. OSBORN (Louisiana '16) was elected president of the American Association of Teachers of Journalism at the annual meeting of that association held in New York the last week in December. Osborn is professor of journalism and head of the department of journalism, Louisiana State University; was editor, agricultural extension division of L. S. U. for six years; former president of the American Association of Agricultural College Editors; staff of Baton Rouge Star-Times; contributor to various agricultural journals; contributor to The Book of Rural Life.

VIVIAN (CRAB) CORBLEY (Mont. '25) has been appointed national chief of staff of the Marine Corps League, according to a recent announcement by National Commandant John A. LeJeune. The league is a national organization of men who served with or who are at present members of the marine corps. Corbley is at present editor of the D. A. V. Weekly, a service magazine published at Cincinnati, Ohio.

DEAN A. L. STONE (Mont.) was elected secretary and treasurer of the Association of American Schools at the annual meeting of the organizations held in New York December 28, 1925.

HAROLD S. HEPNER (Mont. '25) is reporting on the Walla Walla Bulletin, in Walla Walla, Washington.

BOB MACHATTON (Mont. '22) is now in Oberwiesenthal, Saxony. Mac-Hatton formerly had been working on the Chicago City News Bureau but is at present touring abroad.

NAT MCKOWAN (Mont. '23) is reporting on the Honolulu Star Bulletin.

BILL COGSWELL (Montana '23) who is working on the Hawaiian Publicity Bureau recently sent a story to Montana Kaimin telling of the Montana University colony on the Islands.

ED HEILMAN (Mont. '26) left school at the end of the fall quarter to join the Anaconda Standard in Butte. He is in the advertising department.

KENNETH YOUEL (Oregon '23) is a reporter on the Brooklyn Eagle stationed at Jamaica, Long Island. "Ken" is remembered on the campus as former editor of the Emerald.

ART RUDD (Oregon '24) after some time spent in free-lance writing and study in New York city, has taken a position with the Associated Editors, Inc., of Chicago, and is now touring the Southwest for features.

ALFRED ERICKSON (Oregon '24) who was formerly on the staff of the Walla Walla Bulletin, is now a reporter on the Southwestern Oregon Daily News at Marshfield. Taylor Huston, '24, recently left the Oregon City Enterprise and joined the same staff.

GEORGE H. GODFREY (Oregon '25) sailed late in January for Hilo, Hawaii, to join the staff of the Hilo Tribune-Herald. He had been secretary of the chapter at Oregon and was once delegate to the national convention.

GEORGE HELMER (Colorado '25) is night city editor of the Greeley Tribune-Republican, at Greeley, Colorado.

ZELL MABEE (Colorado '24) is city editor of the Boulder News-Herald. The News-Herald is owned by Arthur A. Parkhurst, a Colorado associate.

BERNARD FALLER (Colorado '25) has been city editor of the Daily Times, Longmont, Colorado, since early last June.

EVERET CHAPIN (Colorado '22) who has been telegraph editor of the Denver Express since his graduation, has taken a new position with the El Paso Times, at El Paso, Texas.

BEN FLEMING SESSEL (Colorado

'22) former president of the Colorado chapter, is studying in the Harvard Law School.

CHARLES ALLEN (North Dakota '24) is editor of a booklet, "Illinois' Greatest Football Game," a forty-page collection of newspaper clippings and photographs all relevant to the Illinois 24 to 2 victory over Pennsylvania last fall. Since his graduation at North Dakota, Allen has been an instructor in journalism at the University of Illinois.

F. LESLIE ERHARDT (North Dakota '25) is a member of the journalism faculty at the University of North Dakota.

MAURICE O. RYAN (North Dakota '25) former chapter president, is now editor of the Devil's Lake (North Dakota) World, a weekly.

PETER BURTNESSE (North Dakota '25) is editing the Foster County Independent, a weekly at Carrington, N. D. Burtness had been connected with the paper before his graduation, having worked on it during his vacations and even having taken over the editing during the spring of 1924, when the owner had been unable to carry on the work. The Independent was awarded first place among the weeklies in the state by the State Newspaper Association.

CHARLES EVANS (North Dakota '25) is University and East Grand Forks reporter for the Grand Forks Herald, while he is taking work at the University of North Dakota. This work will apply toward a master's degree.

ALFRED D. WALLING (Columbia '24) is a copy reader on the staff of the Boston Globe.

HERBERT BRUCKER (Columbia '24) a former Pulitzer traveling scholar, is now reporting for the New York World.

ALBERT PFALTZ (Columbia '24) is the news editor of the Electrical Record, New York City.

DAVID P. SENTNER (Columbia '23) is a reporter for the International News Service, New York.

PAUL W. WHITE (Columbia '23) has recently become Assistant City Editor in the New York office of the United Press.

HOWARD MARSHALL, former president of the Texas chapter, has been forced to give up a position with the Oil Weekly because of illness.

# Invading the Technical Field

By C. H. VIVIAN

Colorado '19—Free Lance Writer

**E**XPERIENCE of the last eighteen months has revealed to me a large and growing field for writers which is probably totally overlooked by ninety-five per cent of the students in college who are preparing themselves for journalistic careers. I refer to trade journals and companion publications, of which there are some 1,600 in the United States important enough to be given mention by national advertising rate services.

I am reliably informed that there are in the entire nation less than ten persons who are earning a livelihood solely from their writings for such publications. For a year and a half I have been one of them. I have learned that it is an interesting game, particularly to one speculatively inclined. I believe it offers desirable openings for a considerable number of college-trained journalists and it is for the purpose of directing their attention to it that I set down a few disconnected facts concerning it.

Standard Rate and Data Service lists exactly fifty journals devoted to the grocery trade. Some of them are national in scope; others cover limited sections, even down to a single city. Many of them are official organs of associations of grocerymen. Other fields are not so generously represented, but in every line of retail trade, in every branch of industry, in every profession, you will find from one to twenty-five publications.

**M**OST of them obtain the matter they publish from persons identified with the particular line of endeavor which they exploit. For instance, an advertising man in a general dry goods store in Oshkosh reads in one of the journals an article dealing with window trimming and advertising. He is familiar with such things and realizes after reading the article that he has something to contribute on the subject. Some evening when he has nothing else to do, he puts his ideas on paper and drops them in the mail. His article is published and he becomes a regular contributor. But, lacking the facility of expression and the nose for news which has been pounded into the trained writer, his fount soon runs dry. However, some other brother over in Redlands, California, is just mobilizing his talents about that time, so the ink is kept busy on the subject just the same.

Newspaper men regularly employed on daily papers are another source of material. In almost every city of any size in the country there are reporters who add to their monthly stipend through work for these journals. Usually they are accredited correspondents who make the rounds of the stores,

gathering news and features. Normally they confine their activities to one or two publications owing to their lack of time to handle more.

Journals devoted to retail trade specialize on stories dealing with sales promotion, store organization, advertising, window trimming and kindred subjects. If one has a flair for business, such writing is interesting, though my advice to such a young journalist would be to go into business. Certainly, the financial rewards which will accrue to him from writing for this class of journal will hardly keep pace with profits from a well conducted mercantile establishment.

**T**HE big field for the writer lies rather in other lines, particularly those having to do with industries and technical development. Not only is the interest greater, but the remuneration is better. Above all, there is a chance to grow, to gain a foundation for more lofty literary pursuits later in life.

I live in a university city. Last fall, just prior to the opening of the fall term, a youngster of probably seventeen years presented a letter of introduction from a friend of mine in a western Colorado city of 2,000 persons. The bearer of the letter had been reared there. He was enrolling in college and wanted to prepare himself for a journalistic career. He had been directed to me as one who had been through the newspaper mill to receive counsel and whatever kindly advice I could bestow.

"What would you advise me to study mostly in the university?" he asked me.

"Engineering," I answered.

Naturally, the prospective freshman was taken clear off his feet: I didn't blame him for looking at me as though he thought I was not quite all there. So I hastened to give him my reasons. Briefly, they were these:

The technical fields apparently have been largely overlooked by college men bent upon journalistic careers. The newspaper field, on the contrary, is near the saturation point. The average newspaper man can not write technical stuff, because he has devoted his time to literature, history, economics, drama, sports—in fact to just about everything but technical matters. The result is that there is a shortage of writers who can handle technical subjects with any degree of skill both as to accuracy of information and facility of expression.

The average engineer dislikes writing to the point of loathing. I have seen competent engineers fret and fume over the compilation of a report which involved little more than collocating a series of facts

and figures. When it comes to dressing up their exploits in verbiage designed to make interesting reading, most of them profess absolute inability.

More than a year ago a football stadium was constructed at Colorado university. It presented several unique engineering features. As it had been built under the supervision of members of the university engineering faculty, I watched the technical press for a description of it. When twelve months had elapsed without anything appearing, I essayed the task myself, despite my lack of technical education. I submitted a manuscript to one of the leading engineering journals. It was accepted, but request was made for blueprints showing certain details of construction. I sought them from one of the engineers in charge.

**H**E was greatly surprised that I had written the article. He had expected to do it himself; in fact, it was incumbent upon him to do so. His faculty colleagues expected him to "publish" something on the subject. Seeing that there was a matter of professional dignity involved, I tried to play the part of loyal alumnus. After much discussion, we decided that he was to write his article and receive whatever acclaim might result. I, having no dignity to maintain, consented to be satisfied with the check from the publishers. It looked like a good arrangement all around. However, though four months have slipped by, the faculty member has not screwed himself up to the literary pitch necessary to write an article about a subject which he knows backward and forward.

I cite this incident merely to show how anxious engineering folk are to write stuff for the technical press. There are young engineers out on the job who would write about projects in which they are involved, except for an ethical point. Being in a subordinate position, they commonly feel that they have no right to discuss the work. Such writings

are left to the chief engineer or members of his immediate staff. These ordinarily have no inclination to write or are too busy to do so.

Payment for trade journal writing is usually made on a word basis. It varies from one-half cent up to two cents, although candor compels the admission that those trade publications which pay writers two cents are few and far between.

## Hail North Dakota—Montana

You've heard of "western hospitality"—that friendliness so characteristic of the so called "open spaces?" Sometimes that hospitality is evidenced in the passing out of a cooling drink to a weary rider who is making his way across the endless stretches of prairie, homeward. But that's only out where houses are scarce and views plentiful.

In the cities, this friendliness is expressed in the exchange of pleasantries—and letters. That's it—letters.

North Dakota Chapter started it when a chapter news letter over Chapter President Ralph B. Curry's name was mailed to every chapter and national officer of Sigma Delta Chi. The letter told just what North Dakota is doing to keep the Efficiency Cup—all-university vaudeville, campus speakers, new journalism equipment, high school press conference, etc., etc.

Then Montana, also imbued with that same western hospitality, wrote an answering letter telling what Montana is doing. And this letter, through the courtesy of National Secretary Roy L. French, was mimeographed and distributed to all the chapters. Montana Chapter is handling publicity for the State University and has charge of programs for sports events, both of which activities prove a source of revenue for the chapter. Then they have charge of the Montana Interscholastic Press Association, and at the present time are working on a Montana Chapter history and are sponsoring the honor system for the Montana school of journalism. This letter went out over the name of Ben Quisenberry, secretary Montana Chapter.

Now the question is—what chapter will be next. How about some of the eastern chapters acquiring some of that "western hospitality."

**A**T a west coast college a student matriculated in electrical engineering. Shortly after, he became interested in journalism. He started as reporter on the college daily and later became editor. After he had received his engineering degree, he elected to follow journalism. He obtained a place as reporter on the staff of a San Francisco newspaper. He had been there but a year or so, when death invaded the staff of the leading electrical engineering journal published in Frisco. He was offered the vacancy and took it. Within two years he was managing editor of the publication, a place which he holds today. This is just one case out of scores. The same opportunity is open to you.

ONE point in connection with such writing should be brought out. The college student need not wait until he has completed his course to try his hand at it. He can get copies of retail journals from merchants in his city, while technical magazines are at his disposal in the engineering libraries of all colleges. He can look them over, see what sort of material they publish, then seek out something locally that appeals to him and shoot it in to the editor. If it fails to pass muster, all he is out is postage and his time. When it comes back, he can do one of two things, either throw it aside to be forgotten, or study it over revise it and send it to another journal in the same field. The latter course is the one always pursued by the free lance whose bread and butter depends upon getting his stuff across.

**A**T a west coast college a student matriculated in electrical engineering. Shortly after, he became interested in journalism. He started as reporter on the college daily and later became editor.

# Revolutionizing the Fourth Estate

By PROF. GEORGE W. GORE, JR.

I. and A. Normal College, Nashville, Tenn.



AN a happy medium be struck between theory and practice? The question has been debated for time immemorial; thinkers have discussed the question and doers have worked upon it, and still it looms up again everytime an attempt is made to revolutionize practice by reducing it to theory.

In no profession did the idea of practical application hold so firmly as in the newspaper field. Editors boasted of the tangible nature of their work and held contempt for theorists and philosophers. The nineteenth century journalists prided themselves in the fact that their minds were not contaminated by the vile air of a college campus, where youthful mentalities were ruined by academic abstractions.

So imagine the shock that was experienced by the members of the fourth estate when they learned, in 1869, that General Robert E. Lee, president of Washington College, had recommended the establishment of an elementary course in journalism! The catalog for the succeeding year stated that the course was to be one in newswriting supplemented by laboratory work in a printing shop. No sooner had this fact become known, when the great editors of the country began to hurl bitter denunciations at the proposed plan. "E. L. Godkin, of the New York Evening Post, characterized the establishment of a special chair or the creating of a special class in journalism 'as an absurdity.'"<sup>\*</sup> Similar comments followed which defended the *ancient regime*. Experts declared that the only road to professional journalism was for the beginner to become, first, an apprentice, then a journeyman, and finally a master workingman. Nevertheless the course in journalism continued to be offered, and much to the chagrin of the newsworld it grew and waxed stronger in popularity and mellowed with age.

**G**RADUALLY journalists awoke to the feasibility of the plan. The prejudiced and reactionary notions that they held to so tenaciously in former days slowly passed away with the coming of the new era in the professional world. Whitelaw Reid, of the New York Tribune, dared to prophecy that "we shall see the time when strictly professional education for journalists will be better than it is now."<sup>†</sup>

Once started the movement for reform gained momentum and velocity. Its progress proved irre-

sistible, and despite all the efforts of the newspaper men the plan was adopted by several large state universities. The first technical instruction was offered by the University of Pennsylvania with Joseph Johnson, of the Chicago Tribune, as instructor. Work was offered in newspaper practice, current events, history of journalism, and the art of newspaper making. Similar courses were adopted by the Universities of Michigan and Missouri. In fact the University of Missouri was the first institution to establish a School of Journalism in the academic sense of the word. The foundation of this school marked the beginning of professional training for journalists, and since its beginning it has been steadily reaching to higher and loftier ideals.

**C**ROSSING the prairies and the mountain ranges the new fad spread over the west. State schools began to offer courses to undergraduates, and even went a step further and invited editors throughout the state to take work in newswriting. In some states the universities inaugurated "Newspaper Week" for editors to discuss the science and problems of journalism. Correspondence courses were offered for those unable to attend the regular recitations and lectures. In short, true to the western ideals of democracy, journalism was offered to all.

At present more than eighty-five institutions of higher education offer some training in journalism. The instruction varies from single courses in newswriting in smaller colleges to well-rounded departments in the larger universities. In most colleges it is a part of the English department, in others it is a distinct chair, and in a few universities it is listed as a separate school.

One may rightly ask from whence did the profession of journalism come? What is its origin and history? Journalism began in ancient Rome. The first paper was the *Acta Diurna*, which was written on tablets and reported general news such as fires, executions, campaigns, storms, etc. The first step in the development of the subject came with the issuing of letters and circulars during the political and social and religious unrest of the Middle Ages. Possibly the greatest event in the history of journalism was the invention of the printing press which gave rise to the first newspaper.

In America the first newspaper was "Public Occurrences both Foreign and Domestic", published in Boston in 1690. Until 1725 Boston and New York alone had newspapers. The year 1830 marked an immense expansion in journalism; the great New York dailies were established. The *Daily Sun* was

\*M. L. James, Government Bulletin for 1919, Instruction in Journalism in the Institutions of Higher Education, p. 8.

†Ibid.

the first penny paper. Illustrated dailies began with the *New York Graphic*. The Civil War necessitated the Sunday paper. A desire for service and the generalization of news distribution lead to the forming of the Associated Press. Change after change has caused new features in the journalistic world, until in the twentieth century we are enjoying the results of years of experimentation.

During all these physical changes in the newspaper world, many correlated changes are evident. The newspaper today serves a multiplicity of functions in comparison with its minor functions of colonial days. The increase of our territorial possessions, the industrial revolution, the complexity of international and national politics, the rapid succession of great events, and the artificiality of our modern city life, have all tended to make the general public dependent upon the public press. Today the newspaper molds public sentiment and is the common authority for public views. And because this is true, it must logically follow that the position of the journalist is one of the highest importance. It is essential that those who contribute to the columns of our newspapers should be well-trained.

**T**O allow men who lack training to occupy such a position as that of shaping public opinion in a democracy is a tragedy. The position of the journalist in our national life is a peculiar and important one. Whitelaw Reid best interpreted his position when he said in the editorial columns of the *New York Tribune*:

"The journalist's opportunity is beyond estimate. To him is given the keys of every city, the entry to every family, the ear of every citizen when he is in the most receptive moods, powers of approach and persuasion beyond those of the Protestant pastor or the Catholic confessor. He is no man's priest, but his words carry wider and further than the priest's for he preaches the gospel of humanity. He is not a king, but he nourishes and trains the king, for the land is ruled by the public opinion he evokes and shapes. If you value this good land, the Lord has given us, if you would have a share in this marvelous salvation and lifting power of humanity, look well to the nurturing and the training of the king."

Since the newsgatherer occupies this position it follows that he needs thorough training. This duty falls upon the teachers of journalism; to them is entrusted the sacred task of instructing youths to become intelligent reporters. If they fail to lay the proper foundations serious consequences will result. The aims of these instructors should be to impress upon the student-reporter's mind the fact that university training is essential to professional training.

In the first place, a liberal arts education is an indispensable part of a reporter's qualifications. In order that we may have news that is dependable and reliable, we must have reporters who have a

rich store of knowledge so that they can correctly interpret events. All reporters should have comprehensive knowledge of the principles of economics, political science, foreign language, sociology, literature, philosophy, psychology, and history. Such intelligence is necessary as a background before they can hope to intelligently read the signs of the time.

The college of liberal arts can only hope to do two things toward shaping future journalists. They are: (1) To develop habits of observation, alertness of mind, and facility of expression, and (2) To bring out talents through school publications, and encourage students to aspire to professional journalism. The first of these tasks is performed by the nature of the liberal arts curriculum, and the second is achieved through student publications and the experienced advice of journalistic instructors.

**S**PECIAL emphasis is placed upon accuracy of news items. Carelessness and inaccuracy are severely criticized from the start. The ability to keep one's head and to think logically under the strain of pressing conditions is strongly impressed upon the student's mind. An understanding of the psychology of newswriting is also a vital part of the training.

As a further supplement to the journalistic work, Press Clubs have been used to a great advantage. The object of these clubs is to unite the students interested in journalism, to bring to their respective schools noted journalists to give lectures, and to take an active part in giving publicity to their *alma mater*.

No profession in the twentieth century offers such a wonderful opportunity to the college man or woman as journalism. It is a new subject, a new profession, and a noble work. It is a field in which great service is rendered to humanity. Today the harvest is ripe but the laborers are few. The opportunity to make good in the newspaper world knocks at the door of every live and wide-awake college student.

**T**HREE is at present an unprecedented demand for teachers of journalism, and owing to the scarcity of such instructors college chairs are going begging for occupants. The field is not overcrowded with corps of experts, but on the other hand is one which offers experiment, achievement, and success to the beginner who is willing to work. Yesterday the cry was "go west young man and grow up with the country." Today journalism offers the same opportunity.

As a college subject journalism has come to stay. Public sentiment has indorsed it, and the fourth estate has been compelled to recognize it and has even accepted it as an ally. The revolution has been successful. The day of the print shop apprenticeship is past. The future looks forward to high grade instruction for those who are to work in our factories where opinion is molded.

# News Room Philosophy

By PHILLIP D. JORDAN

Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University



THE gong in the composing room has just sounded. It is nine o'clock and the printers are knocking off, are putting down their makeup rules, all grimy with ink, and are hanging their blue canvas aprons upon the rusted hooks driven into the dirty walls of the shop. These men won't have to come back to work for an hour now. For an hour the rattling linotypes, the swishing Ludlows, and the proof presses will not move. But the metal won't get cold in the linotypes nor will the fire go out under the steel pots of the squat head-setting machines... Things are just resting, that is all.

The lights in the city room are dimmed by the cub who, chucked away in one corner, tends to lightsousing, the telephones, and tobacco for other members of the night staff. Four months ago he was a quiet unassuming kid with the light of adolescent romance in his eyes and the fire of journalistic ambition in his speech. He still believed newspapering to be the profession which demanded the time and consideration of college men—men trained in the cultural subjects—men who could treat a first class murder with aplomb and who could cover a musical festival with assurance. The cub had idealized the profession to the supreme mysteries and miracles of the Arthurian legends; and it was always the reporter who rode to war against crime and vice as Galahad galloped forth to win his spurs and the Grail.

BUT he has changed now. Changed in that same subtle manner that all newspaper men do. Without his knowing it, the deadline horror has brought lines into his face and the constant fear of a scoop has eaten into the complacency of his peace. Our cub is tasting the bitter details of "cubship." An hour ago he brought back the story of an unknown child born in the midst of one of our great park districts between the lake and the drive where hundreds of motorists pass hourly and where no one cared whether the little woman who, by the way,

died when the baby came, lived or died. I think that is why she died... No one caring. Anyway, the cub was tasting all the bitter details of his story. When the desk phone shrills now, the cub fumbles the receiver nervously instead of letting it drift through the tobacco smoke to his ear in a philosophic fashion. He is catching the nervous undertone of all newspaper shops; he is wondering as he pulls the receiver to his ear whether he has to taxi after a flying ambulance to a messy auto accident or must sit in on one of those midnight inquests held in the back room of some undertaking establishment on the south side.

Our cub is getting a bit tired of sitting on the end of a coffin and watching some butcher-embalmer slit a neck, stick his rubber-gloved fingers into the sucking hole, and split a red vein with a narrow scalpel.

## Many Taking Journalism

Lawrence W. Murphy, head of the department of journalism, University of Illinois, and second national vice-president of Sigma Delta Chi, has just completed a survey of journalism courses which shows that approximately 5000 students are being taught journalism in 50 schools by 200 instructors.

Mr. Murphy's estimate by courses is as follows: reporting, 3,000 students; feature writing, 2,100; introductory courses, 4,500; advertising, 2,700; copy reading, 1,500; history of journalism, 700; ethics of journalism, 650; country journalism, 450; law of the press, 450.

In addition to these courses, students are enrolled in courses in editorial writing, critical writing, agricultural journalism, the teaching of journalism, publicity, and public opinion.

More than 50 professional courses and schools of journalism are operating today, says Mr. Murphy, as compared with approximately 85 schools of medicine and 130 schools of law.

leave such a hole and then attend a wedding where the bride is young and pretty and where the bridegroom is really handsome and cultured. How, he asked me the other day, can the two things go hand in hand?

I answered him after a fashion, for I have been in the game for only three years and yet am aged by it. I am spoken of as "one of the old boys". I tapped idly the keys of my typewriter before I answered the cub and, somehow or other I just couldn't find the words which I wanted. I can find the vocabulary to describe an accident, an art exhibition, or a political meeting, but there are times when everyone finds it hard to express himself.

Then I told him what I thought.

"Cub," I said, "You're a damn fool."

And I sucked on my pipe as I wondered if this

was the way to begin. I remembered the squatly little city ed, who beat newspapering into me, who kept me on my feet long after deadline and long, long after I should have been in bed. I remembered that I had come to that little man who continually bit his finger nails so that the tips were raw and snubby and sometimes bleeding. Yet he would use these fingers night after night to stump out news stories. And I had asked him what the newspaper game was all about. It was then that he had quit chewing his nails long enough to say, "Cub, you're a damn fool."

"Cub," I repeated, "You are not yet old enough in the game to be seriously dented by it. Impressions are doing to you what they are bound to do sooner or later. Sometimes it is better to receive vivid impressions and true ones than to go thru the world seeing the actions of your acquaintances in an artificial glamour. If newspapering seems hard and tough and realistic to you, why remember that real life to the majority of people is hard, is tough, and is realistic.

**R**EMEMBER, cub, that the shriek of the presses and the howl of the speaking tube is only the symbolic shriek of the dying and the symbolic howl of the victim. Remember that your pages of written copy represent a cross-section of human life; remember that you are weaving the various colored threads of your companions and friends. Sometimes you will have a chance to dip these threads in ink to make them more attractive and more appealing. But if you do they lose reality and become newspaper fiction. There is enough red in the world without your using red ink.

"But, cub, be sour enough on the world to see it in its true light. Focus true. Don't cultivate the Rotarian spirit. There is little necessity for your following the dark-bound copies of Hardy's philosophy, but there is a decided need for you to see things as they are—if they are mean and ugly and dirty and sexual and unspeakable, remember that these things are a part of life. When some North Shore professor tells you that such reactions are obscene and literary garbage tell him to cover your morgue beat with you and then ask him to write truthfully. Tell him that truth is still more beautiful than beauty.

"Of course, there are the lighter sides of the newspaper career and there are the high keys of the world. See them also. But remember, cub, that there are more shadows than colors and that the colors would be dull against anything but a black and white background.

"And that is why the two things go side by side."

**T**HE lights of the city room were flashing up and the clatter of the typewriters were resumed. With the first noises of the machines came the first puffs of smoke which would soon veil the entire room and surround each bent reporter with a haze

of unreality... Something like the veil which covers the life of most newsmen.

The cub was running over to the Third street station to catch a taxi and then follow out an ambulance to some railroad crossing where lay the messed wreck of a man.

The gong in the composing room started the printers to gathering grimy and inky makeup rules, to strapping on their canvas aprons, and to rushing into the last copy preparatory for the bulldog edition.

If I was going to make "30" I must stop thinking about the cub and finish telling an awakening world how two dagoes killed one another in a Greek cafe a little over three hours ago.

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